

Assembly Bill No. 783

CHAPTER 614

An act to amend Sections 116275 and 116480 of, and to add Section 116326 to, the Health and Safety Code, relating to public water systems.

[Approved by Governor October 13, 2007. Filed with
Secretary of State October 13, 2007.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 783, Arambula. Public water systems.

Existing law, known as the California Safe Drinking Water Act, requires the State Department of Public Health to administer provisions relating to the regulation of drinking water to protect public health, including, but not limited to, conducting research, studies, and demonstration programs relating to the provision of a dependable, safe supply of drinking water, enforcing the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, adoption of enforcement regulations, and conducting studies and investigations to assess the quality of water in domestic water supplies.

Existing law, the Calderon-Sher Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996, requires the State Department of Public Health to submit to the Legislature a Comprehensive Safe Drinking Water Plan for California once every 5 years, and to take all reasonable measures necessary to reduce the risk to the public health from waterborne illnesses in drinking water caused by cryptosporidium and giardia.

This bill would require the department, in administering programs to fund improvements and expansions of small community water systems, as defined, to award funds using specified priorities.

Existing law permits the department to enter into oral contracts, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 for immediate remedial action necessary to remedy or prevent emergencies related to contamination of the drinking water supply.

This bill would increase this amount to \$10,000.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 116275 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

116275. As used in this chapter:

- (a) "Contaminant" means any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological substance or matter in water.
- (b) "Department" means the State Department of Health Services.
- (c) "Primary drinking water standards" means:

(1) Maximum levels of contaminants that, in the judgment of the department, may have an adverse effect on the health of persons.

(2) Specific treatment techniques adopted by the department in lieu of maximum contaminant levels pursuant to subdivision (j) of Section 116365.

(3) The monitoring and reporting requirements as specified in regulations adopted by the department that pertain to maximum contaminant levels.

(d) “Secondary drinking water standards” means standards that specify maximum contaminant levels that, in the judgment of the department, are necessary to protect the public welfare. Secondary drinking water standards may apply to any contaminant in drinking water that may adversely affect the odor or appearance of the water and may cause a substantial number of persons served by the public water system to discontinue its use, or that may otherwise adversely affect the public welfare. Regulations establishing secondary drinking water standards may vary according to geographic and other circumstances and may apply to any contaminant in drinking water that adversely affects the taste, odor, or appearance of the water when the standards are necessary to ensure a supply of pure, wholesome, and potable water.

(e) “Human consumption” means the use of water for drinking, bathing or showering, hand washing, or oral hygiene.

(f) “Maximum contaminant level” means the maximum permissible level of a contaminant in water.

(g) “Person” means an individual, corporation, company, association, partnership, limited liability company, municipality, public utility, or other public body or institution.

(h) “Public water system” means a system for the provision of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year. A public water system includes the following:

(1) Any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the operator of the system which are used primarily in connection with the system.

(2) Any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under the control of the operator that are used primarily in connection with the system.

(3) Any water system that treats water on behalf of one or more public water systems for the purpose of rendering it safe for human consumption.

(i) “Community water system” means a public water system that serves at least 15 service connections used by yearlong residents or regularly serves at least 25 yearlong residents of the area served by the system.

(j) “Noncommunity water system” means a public water system that is not a community water system.

(k) “Nontransient noncommunity water system” means a public water system that is not a community water system and that regularly serves at least 25 of the same persons over six months per year.

(l) “Local health officer” means a local health officer appointed pursuant to Section 101000 or a local comprehensive health agency designated by

the board of supervisors pursuant to Section 101275 to carry out the drinking water program.

(m) “Significant rise in the bacterial count of water” means a rise in the bacterial count of water that the department determines, by regulation, represents an immediate danger to the health of water users.

(n) “State small water system” means a system for the provision of piped water to the public for human consumption that serves at least five, but not more than 14, service connections and does not regularly serve drinking water to more than an average of 25 individuals daily for more than 60 days out of the year.

(o) “Transient noncommunity water system” means a noncommunity water system that does not regularly serve at least 25 of the same persons over six months per year.

(p) “User” means any person using water for domestic purposes. User does not include any person processing, selling, or serving water or operating a public water system.

(q) “Waterworks standards” means regulations adopted by the department that take cognizance of the latest available “Standards of Minimum Requirements for Safe Practice in the Production and Delivery of Water for Domestic Use” adopted by the California section of the American Water Works Association.

(r) “Local primacy agency” means any local health officer that has applied for and received primacy delegation from the department pursuant to Section 116330.

(s) “Service connection” means the point of connection between the customer’s piping or constructed conveyance, and the water system’s meter, service pipe, or constructed conveyance. A connection to a system that delivers water by a constructed conveyance other than a pipe shall not be considered a connection in determining if the system is a public water system if any of the following apply:

(1) The water is used exclusively for purposes other than residential uses, consisting of drinking, bathing, and cooking or other similar uses.

(2) The department determines that alternative water to achieve the equivalent level of public health protection provided by the applicable primary drinking water regulation is provided for residential or similar uses for drinking and cooking.

(3) The department determines that the water provided for residential or similar uses for drinking, cooking, and bathing is centrally treated or treated at the point of entry by the provider, a passthrough entity, or the user to achieve the equivalent level of protection provided by the applicable primary drinking water regulations.

(t) “Resident” means a person who physically occupies, whether by ownership, rental, lease or other means, the same dwelling for at least 60 days of the year.

(u) “Water treatment operator” means a person who has met the requirements for a specific water treatment operator grade pursuant to Section 106875.

(v) “Water treatment operator-in-training” means a person who has applied for and passed the written examination given by the department but does not yet meet the experience requirements for a specific water treatment operator grade pursuant to Section 106875.

(w) “Water distribution operator” means a person who has met the requirements for a specific water distribution operator grade pursuant to Section 106875.

(x) “Water treatment plant” means a group or assemblage of structures, equipment, and processes that treats, blends, or conditions the water supply of a public water system for the purpose of meeting primary drinking water standards.

(y) “Water distribution system” means any combination of pipes, tanks, pumps, and other physical features that deliver water from the source or water treatment plant to the consumer.

(z) “Public health goal” means a goal established by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 116365.

(aa) “Small community water system” means a community water system that serves no more than 3,300 service connections or a yearlong population of no more than 10,000 persons.

(ab) “Disadvantaged community” means the entire service area of a community water system, or a community therein, in which the median household income is less than 80 percent of the statewide average.

SEC. 2. Section 116326 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

116326. In administering programs to fund improvements and expansions of small community water systems, the department shall do all of the following:

(a) Give priority to funding projects in disadvantaged communities.

(b) Encourage the consolidation of small community water systems that serve disadvantaged communities in instances where consolidation will help the affected agencies and the state to meet all of the following goals:

(1) Improvement in the quality of water delivered.

(2) Improvement in the reliability of water delivery.

(3) Reduction in the cost of drinking water for ratepayers.

(c) Pursuant to subdivision (b), allow funding for feasibility studies performed prior to a construction project to include studies of the feasibility of consolidating two or more community water systems, at least one of which is a small community water system that serves a disadvantaged community.

(d) In instances where it is shown that small community water system consolidation will further the goals of subdivision (b), give priority to funding construction projects that involve the physical restructuring of two or more community water systems, at least one of which is a small community water system that serves a disadvantaged community, into a single, consolidated system.

SEC. 3. Section 116480 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

116480. (a) The department shall expend moneys available in the Emergency Clean Water Grant Fund only for the purpose of taking corrective action necessary to remedy or prevent an emergency or imminent threat to public health due to the contamination or potential contamination of the public water supply.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the department may enter into written contracts for remedial action taken or to be taken pursuant to subdivision (a), and may enter into oral contracts, not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) in obligation, when, in the judgment of the department, immediate remedial action is necessary to remedy or prevent an emergency specified in subdivision (a). The contracts, written or oral, may include provisions for the rental or purchase of tools and equipment, either with or without operators, for the furnishing of labor and materials and for engineering consulting necessary to accomplish the work.